



## "Green" Projects Survive

By Callie White  
The Daily World  
May 09, 2009

*\$70 million in funding approved for four issues*

Funding for five environmental and recreational projects in the Twin Harbors survived the state budget process, but the state Legislature torpedoed four in what the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program was calling a best-case scenario before the budget was drawn up.

The Senate version of the budget would have cut funding from \$100 million to \$50 million, which would have affected an additional five projects.

"We're really happy with the \$70 million," said Jill Wasberg, development and communications director for the Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, the group that lobbies the state to fund projects for local governments and state agencies through the program.

"Last time, \$100 million was spectacular, but \$70 million will go a long way," Wasberg said. Especially because it is used in combination with local dollars instead of fully funding any particular projects.

A former Pacific County resident, Wasberg said she was particularly happy for the Twin Harbors' slate of projects.

"You got some good funding," Wasberg said.

The remaining projects include:

- Restoration of five acres of the Chehalis River surge plain in Grays Harbor County, \$60,000. This project will support vast Sitka spruce forested wetlands, extensive shorelines and sloughs, and high quality wetlands.
- Riparian protection along the Chehalis River surge plain in Grays Harbor County, \$719,670. The project will acquire 403 acres, including critical parts of Preacher's and Blue sloughs, completing a preserve that protects juvenile salmon, other fish, birds and other animals.

- Silverspot Butterfly Enhancement in Pacific County, \$40,500. This project maintains violet meadows for the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly, a federally threatened species, and begins tree removal to expand the size of the meadow in cooperation with Evergreen State College and Woodland Park Zoo.
- John's River Restoration, \$250,000. This project will restore 185 acres of wetlands on the largest remaining diked estuary that can be restored in the Grays Harbor.
- Pioneer Park Field Lighting in Aberdeen, \$500,000. This means new field lights and new electrical service to four baseball and softball fields.

A project that would have bought 166 acres near Loomis Lake State Park in Pacific County received \$1.6 million out of a request for more than \$2.5 million.

Projects that were cut included one that would preserve coastal wetlands and estuary ecosystems in the Bone River and Niawiakum River areas of Pacific County and would cost about \$883,000; one that would restore about 5,000 acres and protect an additional 1,000 acres of salt marshes and freshwater wetlands along the Elk River in Grays Harbor County, costing \$2 million; and one that would protect 870 feet of ocean waterfront on 10/5 acres of the Long Beach Peninsula in Pacific County.

Wasberg said the agencies and local governments in charge of those projects would have an opportunity to reapply for funding in two years.